

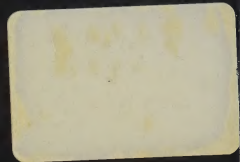
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Community Employment Development Program of Metropolitan Toronto

ANAL EVALUATION REPORT

ARIO MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES
RESEARCH AND PLANNING BRANCH
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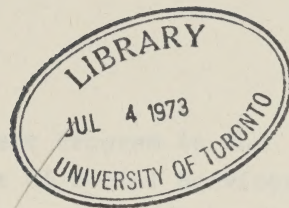
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No. 1

COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Ontario

Ministry of Community and Social Services

Honourable Rene Brunelle, Minister

T.M. Eberlee, Deputy Minister

Research and Planning
Branch

PREFACE

The Community Employment Development Program is the work activity project of the Department of Social Services of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto. It is designed to develop the work motivation of long term recipients of social assistance. Upgrading classes and work assignments are provided in a human environment designed to foster maturity and interpersonal competence. The objectives are to qualify recipients for retraining, strengthen their job seeking efforts and enable them to hold jobs. The 150 recipients who applied during the first eight months (November 1971 to June 1972) were followed-up at the eleventh month (September 1972).

The teachers are paid by the Board of Education of the City of Toronto and other costs are shared with the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

Mrs. Barbara Nease was engaged through the Research and Planning Branch to collect and analyze the data and prepare this report.

October, 1972

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	i
I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT	1
II. RESEARCH PROCEDURES	6
III. FINDINGS	
1. Terminations	8
2. Dropouts	8
3. Continuing	14
4. Returnees	20
5. School	22
6. Types of work activity	25
7. Incentive Allowance	29
8. Debts	30
IV. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	34

LIST OF TABLES

1. Status of Original Work Activity Group at Follow up	8
2. Termination Reasons and Status at Follow up	9
3. Participation of Terminations with Positive Outcomes at Follow up	10
4. Social Characteristics of Terminations with Positive Outcomes at Follow up	11
5. Termination Reasons and Assistance Status at Termination and Follow up	12
6. Months Out of the W.A.P. and Assistance Status at Follow up	13
7. Months in the W.A.P. and Assistance Status at Follow up	14
8. Reasons for Dropping Out and Assistance Status at Follow up	15
9. Comparison of Assistance Status of Dropouts and Terminations at Follow up	16
10. Comparison of Dropouts and Terminations by Age and Education	16
11. Comparison of Dropouts and Terminations by Time on Assistance, Referral Source and Dependents	17
12. Characteristics of Participants Continuing in the W.A.P. Compared with Terminations	18
13. Social Problems of Participants	18
14. Participation Comparing Those Continuing with Terminations	19
15. Reasons for Retermination and Assistance Status at Follow up	20
16. Reasons for Original Terminations of Returnees and Length of Time in the Community Before Return to the W.A.P.	21
17. School Involvement and Participant Status	22

18.	Termination Reasons, Involvement in School Program and Assistance Status at Follow up	23
19.	Relation Between Attendance at School and Financial Independence at Follow up	23
20.	Relation Between School Attendance and Positive Outcome at Termination	24
21.	Monthly Comparisons of Participants Attending Work Only and School and Work	25
22.	Types of Work Activity for all Participants and for Terminations	27
23.	Type of Work Activity and Status at Follow up	28
24.	Type of Work Activity of Workers Who Terminated for Employment or Retraining	29
25.	Average Incentive Allowance and Assistance Status at Follow up	30
26.	Average Incentive Allowance of Continuing Group	30
27.	Project Costs	32

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Many programs designed to relieve poverty tend to perpetuate dependence on public assistance. It is difficult for those with large families and few skills, particularly as they grow older, to earn more on the competitive market than they can receive from welfare payments. Younger people with fewer family responsibilities but hindered by emotional and social disabilities also have problems in getting and holding employment. Compensatory education and retraining programs have been cited as the most effective poverty reducing techniques. Research suggests, however, that often such approaches tend to be failures in cost benefit terms, even on an intergenerational basis, in spite of the general correlation between years of schooling and higher income. The inability of education to fill the role of poverty panacea can be attributed to the fact that most people who continue to higher education do so because of high motivation while the poor who take part in educational programs designed for them are frequently not so propelled. It is apparent then that generating and sustaining motivation must play a major part in any far reaching attempt to reduce the public assistance rolls. Job finding and education are not in themselves enough for the long term or the potentially long term poor.

Much of the input of the Metropolitan Toronto Work Activity Project (W.A.P.) is focussed on developing motivation in the participants. The Project is operated by the Metropolitan Toronto Department of Social Services and cost shared with the Provincial and Federal governments under the Canada Assistance Plan. The teachers' salaries are paid by the Board of Education of the City of Toronto. The formal objectives are to qualify those who enter the program for retraining, change their job seeking behaviour and assist them to hold employment. Academic, work training and socializing experiences in an informal milieu atmosphere are used to reach these ends. A sliding scale incentive allowance is used as concrete evidence of progress in the work component. Tangibly the program can be evaluated in terms of its achievement of the explicit

goals; the intangible benefits and the implicit aims are more difficult to measure. Whether the program is deemed to be worthwhile is in part a value judgement and depends on the degree of success or failure that is acceptable. The earlier report pointed out that in many cases the work activity members are the rejects of other helping systems. Their backgrounds are marked by physical, psychiatric and learning disabilities, family deprivation, institutionalization, and contact with a variety of rehabilitation and social agencies. At the point they enter the program, most would fall into the potentially employable rather than the employable category. It is apparent that a new approach is essential to meet the needs of this many-problemmed group and at the same time promote their independence.

Innovative programs have kinks to iron out. Since the first evaluation six months ago, the Toronto project has become better organized, although its lack of outward structure still sometimes gives a picture of chaos. Basic statistics are being kept. The addition of a welfare visitor on loan from Metro Social Services has somewhat eased the pressure on the counsellors and provided a means to keep the files up to date. The work supervisors seem to work unusually long hours sometimes, partly because of the desire of some of the work group to keep busy in the evenings and on Saturday. Several participants have said that the worst thing about being on welfare is the boredom and this is why many drink too much when they get their cheques. The scattering of work sites around the city and the need of some workers for constant supervision hinders the development of a wider variety of work assignments. Possibly several responsible graduates of the W.A.P. could be hired eventually as assistant supervisors or placements could be developed in other Metro departments with those working in these departments providing some degree of supervision.

The relationship with Canada Manpower has proved remarkably fruitful in helping participants get into retraining courses. A

representative from the Provincial Vocational Rehabilitation Services Branch (V.R.S.B.) has agreed to sit on the Selection Committee and it is hoped that this contact will also be beneficial. The Metro Rehabilitation Services Unit is providing support for one former participant in a nurses aid course that Manpower does not sponsor. An increase in their budget could provide for more who want retraining but fall in the gap between Canada Manpower and V.R.S.B.

Relations between the school and work program have improved but it must be remembered that fewer than half the school students are in the work program. The suggestion that the school program be financed through the Work Activity Project is good from the viewpoint that it would increase the integration of the educational and work components. However, the problem would still remain that the majority of students are not eligible for or not interested in the work aspect. Either the intake procedures of the school would have to be changed or the definition of the work program would have to be expanded to include some of the group who are in school only. At the present time, it is difficult to sort out the effect of the school and work aspects because there is so much movement back and forth between the two. Some are in the school first; others start in the work and later go to school. Some drop out of work and concentrate all their energies on school for a month or two or permanently. In other cases the trend is reversed and the school loses students. As admission to and termination from the project formally depends solely on being involved enough in the work activity to receive the incentive allowance, the school component is in a sense ignored in terms of the overall program.

The testing of participants resumed in September at George Brown College. In view of earlier problems in persuading W.A.P. members to participate and the feeling among some staff that the interpretation of results implied criticism of their work, a new approach has been suggested by the George Brown staff. Time spent on motivational counselling and showing the group around the institution

that many of them hope to enter should make the initial contact with the College more meaningful for those in the project. Depending on the number of the original tests still used, the cost of the new program will be between 20 and 30 dollars per student. As few of the initial group tested last winter were available for retesting, the teachers suggested they could administer some tests prior to a student's departure to gain some indication of improvement in various skills. At the present time, there is little before-and-after testing data available. In two cases of initial borderline functioning, however, tests have shown remarkable changes; the man who got the lowest initial test result has been accepted into an auto mechanics course.

The accommodation situation is still poor, not because of the shakbiness of the Family Shelter but because of the scattering of the rooms being used. Some are in the basement and others on the third floor. More rooms are being used now but there is still overcrowding because of the number of participants doing clerical work in the family residence office. This situation is not likely to change because most of the group interested in office work have to build up confidence before they can be placed in a district welfare office. There are also problems in having the warehouse situated so far from the centre of the project. Frequent attempts have been made to find a building suitable to house the entire program, including the school. If the W.A.P. is to continue, a more convenient physical setup is a necessity.

The most outstanding aspect of the Toronto Work Activity Project is the emphasis on experiences that encourage the participants to feel there is another way of life open to them that they can achieve by legitimate means. The same philosophy underlies the school and the work activity. Constant reassurance, reality testing, the chance to act rather than be acted upon, and the taste of success are used to raise and buttress self images battered by constant failure. Expectation rather than acceptance is stressed; aspirations are encouraged. The motto of the school is, "Happiness is finding you

are not so dumb after all." The volunteer concept of helping others is basic to the project and some indicate they join for this purpose, "To help themselves by helping other people and build confidence." The work assignments are designed to promote a sense of usefulness in the workers as much as to provide work training. Those who deliver used appliances and furniture to welfare recipients speak of the "good feeling" they get when they see the joy shown by a young mother who is shut in with several infants upon delivery of a television set. Without intense effort on the part of the staff, volunteers and the participants themselves to actualize the potential of each member of the program, it is unlikely that the work and educational components alone could be successful in raising motivation. Most of those in the project have already spent many years in school with little result; almost all have been employed, again with minimal success.

II

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

In view of the generally unsuccessful life styles of the majority of the work activity members prior to entering the project, it can be assumed that any marked change can be partly attributed to the effects of the program. In this sense the group acts as its own control and previous behaviour is used as a baseline from which to measure change. Another way of measuring change is to use a control or comparison group, the assumption being that differences in outcome between the two groups is caused by the stimulus. In assessing this program, a comparison group is used composed of those who signed up to enter the program but in fact never participated to the extent of receiving the incentive allowance. There is some risk in this method, of course, because the dropouts were "deselected" by themselves rather than by random procedures.

To find out if change has taken place, the 150 people¹ who voluntarily signed up for the program during the first eight months of operation (until the end of June) are followed until the end of the eleventh month (September). They fall into three groups: the dropouts who did not participate, the terminations² who took part in the work program but have since left, and the continuing group who were still active at follow up (the end of September).

The terminations and the dropouts are compared on a number of variables. Welfare status at follow up was checked. Reasons for

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1. Three who signed up but were not on welfare are excluded from the calculations.
 2. The definition of termination has been changed from the first report to coincide with that now used by Metro Social Services. It now refers to former participants who are inactive for at least one month and do not receive an incentive allowance for that month.

termination are examined. The continuing group and those who returned after their original termination are looked at. Length of time on welfare, time in the program, time out of the program, type of work activity, and type and degree of participation are examined for relationship to outcome. Files from the W.A.P. and from the Ministries of Correctional Services, Health and Community and Social Services were used. The master index of the Metro Social Services Department provided information concerning welfare status. Participant observation and unstructured interviews with staff and participants also revealed much useful data.

III

FINDINGS

Table 1: Status of Original Work Activity Group at Follow Up

	Number	Percent
Continuing	29	19.3
Terminated	81	54.
Dropouts	40	26.7
Total	150	100.0

More than half the active participants have left the program, one fifth are still in, and one quarter never became involved enough to receive the incentive allowance. Although the overall dropout rate is high, it declined substantially from 40 percent in the first four months of the program's operation to 12 percent in the next four months. Better organization, more work placements and a more gradual flow into the project have cut down the number of non participants.

1. Terminations

After its first year of operation, the Metropolitan Toronto Community Employment Development Project appears to have had considerable success in terms of its original objectives. More than two thirds of the terminations were for positive reasons. At follow up the results were equally optimistic. It is difficult to divide termination reasons into positive and negative because such things as illness and moving out of town (perhaps to look for a job) are neutral rather than negative. In this analysis, return to the adult retraining school is regarded as positive because it involves a continuation of education even though this group still receives welfare.

Table 2: Termination Reasons and Status at Follow Up

Positive Reasons	At Termination	At Follow Up
working	33	28
retraining	11	11
further education	2	2
adult upgrading school only	6	5
married	2	4
returned to parents	1	1
Sub Total	55 (68%)	51 (63%)
Negative Reasons	At Termination	At Follow Up
travelling or moved	11	9
illness	10	8
personal or family problems	3	3
jail	2	1
	Inactive	9
Sub Total	26 (32%)	30 (37%)
Total	81	81

The project found jobs for four people, two were self employed and the others found their own employment. All but two of those who entered retraining programs were upgraded in the school component of the program. Two of those in the retraining programs and six still working at follow up are former residents of institutions for the retarded, as are two girls who got married. The effect of the W.A.P. on this particular group seems to be extremely favourable.

Between termination and follow up, one in every five changed activities. A young married couple from a hospital school for the retarded and three men lost their jobs. One youth with a drug problem was fired because his probation officer contacted his employer. Another man who had not worked for five years married a girl from the W.A.P. who immediately had an ulcer operation. The third man who lost his job had a long history of psychiatric and correctional institutionalization; another agency had closed his case because of "lack of potential." A fourth man stopped working after he married a girl with a full time government position. A young married man known to Vocational Rehabilitation Services Branch (V.R.S.B.) left the work program to finish grade eight at the upgrading school and then entered a retraining course. Another retraining student is back on welfare after taking a short course. A school student also involved with V.R.S.B. found a job. His brother who became sick following his wife's departure from him, the program and Toronto, returned to school. Two of the travellers, including the boyfriend of the previous man's wife, returned to Toronto. A pregnant girl got married and a woman was released from jail.

Some characteristics of the group who had positive outcomes at follow up are described in the following tables.

Table 3: Participation of Terminations with Positive Outcomes at Follow Up

		Working	Retraining	Further	Adult Up- grading	Married	Returned to
		N=28	N=11	Education	School	N=4	Parents
				N=2	N=5		N=1
Months							
in	Mean	3.8	6	1.5	4.2	4	1
W.A.P.	Median	3	6		4		
		(range 1-11)	(range 1-11)				
Months							
Since	Mean	4.2	4.2	3.5	4.4	3.5	4
Leaving	Median	4	3		5	4	
W.A.P.							
		(range 1-10)	(range 1-10)				
Participated							
in Both School		19	10	0	5	3	0
& Work Aspects							
Number on							
Assistance Over							
Two Years		3	4	0	1	1	0

Table 4: Social Characteristics of Terminations with Positive Outcomes at Follow Up

	Working N=28	Retraining N=11	Further Education N=2	Adult Up- grading School N=5	Married N=4	Returned to Parents N=1
Number with Dependents	8	6	2	1	4	0
Previous Institutionalization	11	5	1	2	3	0
Contact with V.R.S.B.	6	2	1	0	0	0
History of Family Problems	8	8	1	3	3	1
Debts	7	3	0	2	0	0

The retraining group spent the longest time in the program because they needed to finish grade eight before entering a course. Time out of the project is similar for all groups. One third of the workers did not take part in the school component but three of these had more than grade eight education when they entered the W.A.P. and five were in the program for only one month and did not have time to become involved in school. The work group, the retraining group and those still in the school had spent the longest time on public assistance. Fewer than one third of the workers had dependents; one quarter had debts. Institutionalization is high right across the board. Most of the V.R.S.B. cases are now closed. The retrainees, many of whom were single, divorced or separated mothers with children, had a higher proportion of dependents than the other groups.

Achievement of independence from welfare is one concrete measure for evaluating work activity programs. Including those in jail, the number dependent on public funds is almost the same at termination and follow up in spite of some shifting from one classification to another. More than two thirds of the terminations were independent at both termination and follow up.

Table 5: Termination Reasons and Assistance Status at Termination and Follow up

Positive Reasons	<u>Still Receiving Assistance</u>	
	At Termination	At Follow Up
working	1	6
retraining	1	2
further education	1	1
adult upgrading school only	6	4
Sub Total	9	13
Negative Reasons		
	At Termination	At Follow Up
travelling or moved	2	2
illness	10	9
personal or family problems	2	2
jail	0	1
Sub Total	14	14
Total	23 (28%)	27 (31%)

The effect of any program tends to be diluted by the effects of time. However, the intense follow up support provided by the work activity staff and the frequency with which former participants

telephone and drop into the W.A.P. to discuss their triumphs and problems helps prevent loss of the original stimulus.

Table 6. Months Out of the W.A.P. and Assistance Status at Follow Up

Months Out of Program	Receiving Social Assistance	Independent	Jail
1	1	10	
2	5	5	
3	4	11	1
4	5	10	
5	3	3	
6	4	3	
7	0	4	
8	3	5	
9	1	0	
10	1	2	
Total	27	53	1

In general those who terminated later were more likely to be independent of assistance but the correlation is weak. High carry over effects are suggested because the terminations in all but two months were more likely to be independent at follow up. However, as almost two thirds of the terminations took place in the last four months, a longer period out of the project is needed to confirm this observation.

Table 7. Months In the W.A.P. and Assistance Status at Follow Up

Months In Program	Receiving Social Assistance	Independent	Jail
1	8	16	
2	7	10	1
3	2	6	
4	5	5	
5	1	3	
6	1	3	
7	3	3	
8	0	3	
9	0	0	
10	0	2	
11	0	2	
Total	27	53	1

The relationship between time in the program and receipt of assistance at follow up is difficult to determine because more than three quarters of the terminations spent four or fewer months in the project. Almost one third were in for only one month. There is a connection, however, between time in the program and type of outcome at final termination. Those who left because of problems and sickness tended to terminate during the first few months. All but two of the group who had been in for at least six months, left for employment or retraining.

2. Dropouts

The dropouts signed up for the program but for a variety of reasons did not participate. Some found jobs on their own or through the winter works program; others preferred to concentrate

on school. Problems such as sickness, drug involvement and incarceration further depleted the roll. Several felt the incentive allowance was not sufficient compensation for the work they were expected to do.

Table 8: Reasons for Dropping Out and Assistance Status at Follow Up

	<u>Independent</u>	<u>Receiving Assistance</u>
Positive Reasons		
working	7	9
retraining	1	0
adult upgrading school only	4	1
Sub Total	12 (55%)	10 (45%)
Negative Reasons		
sickness	1	5
jail	1	0
didn't like program	0	1
personal problems	0	5
unknown	1	4
Sub Total	3 (17%)	15 (83%)
Total	15	25

More than half of the non participants dropped out for positive reasons compared with two thirds of the terminations who had participated in the work activity program. There was not much difference then in the status of the two groups when they first left the program. At follow up, however, a much higher proportion of the

terminations were off social assistance. Two out of three of the active group were independent, but little more than one third of the group who never became actively involved in the W.A.P.

Table 9: Comparison of Assistance Status of Dropouts and Terminations at Follow Up

	Independent	On Assistance
Terminations	53	21
Dropouts	14	25
chi square = 13.4, $p < .001$		

Excluding the six who are still on assistance, but continuing their education and the one in jail, the results are statistically significant. The chances of so large a difference arising entirely from sampling error are less than one in 1000. It would appear that the Work Activity Program is responsible for the differences in outcome at follow up. The same proportion of dropouts as terminations get jobs but the former fail to hold them. It is the picture at follow up that is striking.

To ascertain whether certain characteristics of the dropouts rather than their nonparticipation in the W.A.P. are responsible for their poor outcome, the two groups are compared on a number of variables.

Table 10: Comparison of Dropouts and Terminations by Age and Education

	Dropouts (N=40) Percent	Terminations (N=81) Percent
Age		
Under 21	20	25
21 to 35	57.5	62.5
Over 35	22.5	12.5
Education		
More than grade 8	33	17
Attended adult retraining school	52.5	66.7

More of the dropouts fall into the older age group but the program was originally designed for those under 35. Unexpectedly, twice the proportion of dropouts have more than grade eight and this may have dulled their interest in the project. Fewer of the non involved had attended the adult retraining school either before or after referral to the W.A.P.

Table 11: Comparison of Dropouts and Terminations by Time on Assistance, Referral Source and Dependents

	Dropouts percent	Terminations percent
More than Two Years on Assistance	37.5	23
Referral Source		
Welfare Visitor	25	30
Metro Social Services Rehab Unit	25	10
Adult Retraining School	47.5	56
Other	2.5	4
Dependents	37.5	28.4

More dropouts fall into the long term welfare category and more of them have dependents. Some may not be able to take jobs over a long period of time without an income supplement. Fewer terminations were referred from Metro Social Services Rehab Unit and this may indicate that the dropouts had more problems to start with. None of these differences between the two groups is however, statistically significant. The point is that a variety of new approaches are needed to break the dependency cycles of many different types of welfare recipients.

3. Continuing Group

Twenty nine participants who had entered before the end of June were still continuing in the W.A.P. at the end of September. They are a heterogeneous group and many resources have been and are now being used to help them. In contrast to the terminations, two thirds have been in the program for at least six months and most are not yet ready to leave. Mental illness, drinking prob-

lems, and the need for basic literacy are mingled with extreme feelings of inadequacy. Some with long histories of psychiatric treatment are not emotionally prepared to function away from a supportive setting although academically they are capable of entering retraining programs. Others have been involved with social agencies almost since birth and take dependency for granted. Some are withdrawn while others go from crisis to crisis. They need advocates to intercede for them regularly and they need the constant help available in the project. For example, the W.A.P. administers the assistance cheque of a young teen aged couple with two infants, and regularly encourages and supervises them so their children need not be taken into care. Most of this long term group need continual reeducation in how to deal with their daily problems if they are to become responsible for their own actions. It is a long term process and some may always need a sheltered work setting.

Table 12: Characteristics of Participants Continuing in the W.A.P. Compared with Terminations

	Percent	Percent
Above grade 8 at admission	10	17
Age (modal group 21-35)	52	62.5
Male	52	64

Table 13: Social Problems of Participants

	Continuing (N=29) Percent	Terminations (N=81) Percent
Time on assistance over two years	52	23
Previous institutionalization	52	46
Known to V.R.S.B.	14	15
Contact with social agencies	43	36
Dependents	40	28.4
Debts	17	18
Family problems	37	33.3

Table 14: Participation Comparing Those Continuing with Terminations

	Continuing (N=29) Average	Terminations (N=81) Average
Months in attendance	8 range 1-11	3.6 range 1-10
	Percent	Percent
Both school and work aspects	80	66.7

Although the majority of the continuing group are in the 21-25 year category, almost 30 per cent are over 35 compared with 12.5 per cent of the terminations. Several with drinking problems find it hard to get and keep a job as they grow older. They cannot take responsibility and need constant supervision. Publicly supported workshops for this group may be cheaper and more humane than imprisonment. A few others with little education but with fairly good work histories are in the program because back injuries and illness have made it difficult for them to do their accustomed jobs involving heavy labour. Because some have families it is unlikely they can earn enough unless they learn a new skill. Most of the continuing group have dependents. More are women and the length of time spent on assistance is longer. There is little difference in previous history of institutionalization but those still in the W.A.P. were more likely to have been in psychiatric institutions, and the terminations in institutions for the retarded or correctional centres.

Several of the continuing group have shown themselves to be effective people who enjoy the satisfaction they receive from being part of this helping process. They are doing such good supervisory work that they might eventually be given the opportunity to be employed as assistant counsellors or supervisors.

4. Returnees

Another special group that overlaps with those still in the program and with the terminations are the 23 who returned to the W.A.P. after their original termination. Two returned more than once; a man who had little trouble getting jobs but kept leaving because he did not like them, and a youth with a background of psychiatric and correctional institutionalization. At follow up, nine of the returnees were continuing in the project.

Table 15: Reasons for Retermination and Assistance Status at

<u>Follow up.</u>	<u>Receiving Assistance</u>	<u>Independent</u>
Employment	1	6
Adult upgrading school	1	
Illness	2	
Travelling		3
Total	4	9

Those who returned tended to have been most heavily involved with other agencies in the past. The majority (87 per cent) were known to other helping systems compared with half of the other participants. It could not be expected then, that one short period of time in the work activity program could complete the process that so many other agencies in the past have been unable to do. The fact that these people felt they could return is a positive sign; this may be the one place where they have felt no rejection. Most treatment centres recognize that several testing periods away from the home base are necessary for achievement of lasting independence. Return to the project is not regarded as a sign of failure but rather as a step forward in the rehabilitation process.

Table 16: Reasons for Original Terminations of Returnees and Length of Time in the Community Before Return to the W.A.P.

	Months Before Return		
	1 - 2	3 - 4	5
Illness	5	2	
Employment	1	1	1
Job seeking	2		
Family problems	3	1	
Travelling	1		
School only	2	2	1
Trying to get into a course	1		
Total	15	6	2

Most were out of the program for only a short time before they returned. Much staff effort was put forth in activating this group and many received help during their time out of the W.A.P. Illness, family problems, and the inability to maintain effort in both school work and work were the main reasons for temporarily leaving. Many have not been used to doing anything on a regular basis and it is difficult to sustain their involvement.

5. School

The adult retraining school existed prior to the work activity program which in a sense is an outgrowth of it. The same philosophy, i.e., non judgmental attitude and treating the whole person rather than just his education or work facets, is evident in both the school and the W.A.P.. The earlier report suggested that those who participated in both the work and the school tended to continue in the program and ultimately would probably have the most positive outcome. This hypothesis is tested in the light of further evidence.

Table 17 shows that the school is still a holding force.

Table 17: School Involvement and Participant Status

Attended Adult Retraining School	
	Percent
Continuing group	80
Terminations	66.7
Dropouts	50

Two thirds of the active terminations had been involved in school. The continuing group had the highest proportion of students. The majority of the participants who did not attend school either had grade 8 education or were in the program for only one month. The latter group were usually on the school waiting list. Only four participants with less than grade eight or more than one month's involvement in the W.A.P. failed to go to school at all; these were not interested.

Table 18: Termination Reasons of Participants, Involvement in School Program and Assistance Status at Follow Up

Reasons for Termination	Receiving Assistance at Follow Up	Independent
Employment	2	19
Retraining	1	8
Attended school only	4	2
Marriage	0	2
Problems	0	1
Illness	7	1
Travelling	1	4
Jail	1	0
Total	16	37

At follow up the school group were slightly better off in terms of financial independence. Two thirds were off assistance compared with four out of seven of the non students.

Table 19: Relation Between Attendance at School and Financial Independence at Follow Up

	School percent	No School percent
Independent	70	57
On assistance	30	43
	(N=53)	(N=28)

When attendance at school was related to positive outcome at the point of termination, a trend also appeared.

Table 20: Relation Between School Attendance and Positive Outcome at Termination

	School percent	No School percent
Positive Outcome	74	57
Negative Outcome	26	43
	(N=53)	(N=28)

Most of the original referrals to the program came from the school and in the early months few people participated in the work alone. Beginning in March, however, the picture changed as more referrals came from district welfare offices, and the school had little room for these new applicants. The district welfare referrals also tended to have a higher level of schooling than the first participants. In the summer months the number in the work program alone grew because some former students had finished grade eight in the upgrading school and were awaiting admission to retraining courses. The number attending went up again in September.

Table 21: Monthly Comparisons of Participants Attending Work Only and School and Work

Month	Work only	Work and school
November	2	26
December	2	26
January	1	44
February	1	37
March	11	43
April	18	41
May	17	43
June	23	37
July	27	23
August	21	26
September	16	36

In view of the tendency for there to be a relationship between positive outcome and involvement in school as well as work, the school could be more involved in intake procedures. It would also be helpful if upgrading beyond the grade eight level were provided in the school. Some participants eventually wish to move on to courses that have a grade 12 or 13 admission requirement. They want to remain in the W.A.P. because the experience they are getting is related to their future work goals (e.g., social service worker). Several are working on correspondence courses beyond grade eight with the help of the teachers and volunteers, but judging from the number (15%) who enter and remain in the program with more than grade eight, a classroom is justified.

6. Types of Work Activity

Most of the work projects involve service to others and stress the indigenous worker concept. Basically the participants volunteer to help others. Two work supervisors plan the work schedule and oversee men who are working in the warehouse repairing donated

furniture and appliances. Some new furniture such as tables is being built. Some men work on a rented truck that is to pick up and deliver donations. Those with chauffeur's licenses drive the truck. Others repair city owned houses. Women sort and repair used clothes. Some participants do maintenance work at the family residence and occasionally at Seaton House, a hostel for men. The counsellors also supervise some of the workers -- those in district welfare offices and day nurseries. Some who are not ready to enter a structured environment initially gain self confidence by working in the W.A.P. office under close supervision. A noonday meal is prepared by another group for all program members who want to have lunch at the family residence; the cost is 25 cents. The experience of buying and preparing food gives these workers knowledge about budgeting and cooking. One girl who hopes to be a social service worker acts as a friendly visitor at Seaton House. Another woman has become so competent that she supervises a group of volunteers who are collecting clothes in Scarborough. Several with more education help the teachers by tutoring.

Some men move back and forth between the truck, warehouse, and house repairs depending on the need. They are categorized according to their most usual placement. Those who have progressed to more responsible placements are grouped according to their last work assignment.

Table 22: Types of Work Activity for all Participants and for Terminations

	All participants until June 30	Terminations in before June 30 and out by Sept.30
Truck	21	16
Clerical work at family residence	17	10
Warehouse	16	15
Maintenance at family residence	13	11
Furniture and appliance repair	8	6
Day care centres	7	7
Clerical work in district offices	7	4
Seaton House	6	2
Clothing	6	5
Kitchen work	4	2
House repairs	4	2
Tutoring	1	1
Total	110	81

There is little link between type of work activity placement and assistance outcome at follow up. In only three categories, warehouse, day nursery and maintenance, were there more in the dependent group at follow up. The maintenance men are often put in this position because they need close supervision. The warehouse tends to be the first placement for most men. The day care placements were not too successful because the women were rarely in direct contact with the children but spent most of their time mending clothes and toys -- a rather boring past time.

The poor quality of the present warehouse accommodation is reflected in the difficulty keeping participants working in this situation. Some switch to maintenance and others to the clothing room at the family residence because lack of heating and plumbing facilities make the work situation almost intolerable. They have to be coaxed to stay at their jobs. Colds are frequent and sickness cuts the participation rate. Security also is poor and many tools have been stolen. If there were proper facilities with definite work areas for the variety of tasks being carried out, more could be accomplished.

Table 23: Type of Work Activity and Status at Follow up

	Dependent	Independent
Truck	3	13
Clerical work at family residence	2	8
Warehouse	8	7
Maintenance	6	5
Furniture and appliance repairs	1	5
Day care	4	3
Clerical work at district office	1	3
Seaton House	0	2
Clothing	1	4
Kitchen work	1	1
House repairs	1	1
Tutoring	0	1
Total	28	53

The workers involved in maintenance, truck pick up and delivery, and furniture and appliance repairs were most likely to get regular employment. The clerical participants tended to take retraining courses.

Table 24: Type of Work Activity of Workers Who Terminated for Employment or Retraining

Type of work activity	Employment	Retraining
Truck	9	1
Clerical work at family residence	1	3
Warehouse	4	2
Maintenance	7	1
Furniture and appliance repairs	4	0
Day care	2	1
Clerical work at district office	1	2
Seaton House	1	0
Clothing	1	0
Kitchen work	1	0
House repairs	1	1
Tutoring	1	0
Total	33	11

7. Incentive Allowance

The incentive allowance paid to work activity participants depends on their attendance, effort, initiative and leadership qualities. It ranges from 3 to 50 dollars a month. Those who make more than 40 dollars a month are known as leaders. In general, the terminations who made the highest monthly average were less likely to receive assistance at follow up.

Table 25: Average Incentive Allowance and Assistance Status at Follow up

Average monthly incentive allowance	Receiving assistance	Jail	Independent
\$40 to 50	0		3
\$30 to 39	0		4
\$20 to 29	4	1	14
\$10 to 19	10		14
Less than \$10	13		18
Total	27	1	53

Most of the group still in the project and who entered during the first eight months are in the high ranges of incentive allowances. Possibly the incentive is a holding force too.

Table 26: Average Incentive Allowance of Continuing Group

\$40 - 50	7
\$30 - 39	10
\$20 - 29	8
\$10 - 19	1
Less than \$10	3
Total	29

8. Debts

The poor seem to pay more. Only with exceptually good management or the good luck to be in public housing can they manage without going into debt. Once they accumulate debts it is a vicious circle; they borrow more to pay their increased outlay. Sometimes going on social assistance seems the only relief they can get from their creditors.

Participants who had been in the program for six weeks were interviewed, and one of the questions dealt with their debts. More than one third of the 70 people questioned owed money, mainly to finance companies. Three quarters of the debtors had dependents compared with only one sixth of the group who owed no money. Unless this group earns a fairly high wage when they terminate, it is unlikely they will be able to remain independent.

9. Costs of Work Activity Project

Projects such as the Metropolitan Toronto Work Activity Project are not inexpensive to operate. However, consideration must be taken of the time participants have already spent on social assistance or are likely to spend in the future without some method of effective intervention. The participants' backgrounds of institutionalization and contact with other rehabilitation and social agencies are other factors to be weighed. The crudest type of institution is more expensive than a community program.

In calculating the costs of the W.A.P. assistance benefits are not included because the participants would be getting them anyway. Salaries, incentive allowances, travel and truck expenses, and staff fringe benefits are calculated from January 1 to April 30: the monthly cost is then worked out. Work activity supplies such as tools, and the costs of testing are prorated over the first seven months of the project's existence. (Project expenses started in October but few participants were admitted until November which, in this report, is regarded as the first official month of operation).

Table 27: Project Costs

January to April		
A	Salaries	\$17,621.50
	Staff fringe benefits	\$ 1,000.69
	Travel	\$ 2,285.25
	Truck costs	\$ 1,579.78
	Incentive allowances	\$ 3,885.00
Total		\$26,372.22 ÷ 4 = \$6,593.05
October to April		
B	Testing	\$ 1,114.00
	Supplies	\$ 811.14
Total		\$ 1,955.14 ÷ 7 = \$ 279.30
Total monthly cost = \$6,872.35		

The average monthly attendance from January to April was 49. The monthly cost per person in attendance is \$140.25.

Another cost not presently paid by the W.A.P. is that of the teachers' salaries. As an average of 40 project members are in the school per month this works out to a monthly cost of \$25 each.

Total costs	W.A.P.	\$140.25
	Teachers	<u>\$ 25.00</u>
		\$165.25

Accommodation costs have been excluded so far because city owned buildings are being used and the cost is not billed to the project. However, the costs of renting equivalent space on the open market were calculated. Normal space requirements of rehabilitation workshops range between 100 to 150 square feet per person including storage, washrooms, etc.* In the project under study, up to 20 people usually work in the warehouse.

* The warehouse space presently being used by the W.A.P. is far in excess of these figures, because of the condition of the warehouse and the special needs of the program.

The estimated costs for 2,500 square feet of warehouse space
2,670 square feet of classroom space
368 square feet of office space
258 square feet of storage space
work out to \$54.15 per month per person. The total could then
run up to \$219.40 per month per participant. The program stresses
the importance of the attitudes of the staff rather than the
physical environment and so overly elaborate buildings are not
necessary as long as they meet minimum health standards and are
conducive to efficient work.

IV

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

New approaches to remove people from social assistance need long term horizons. It is unrealistic to expect that problems developed over many years can be solved in a short time. Nevertheless, the Metropolitan Toronto Work Activity Project has demonstrated remarkable success in the follow up. The group who were actively involved in the program were significantly more likely to have a positive outcome than those who signed up but did not participate. Two thirds terminated for positive reasons such as employment, retraining or continuing their education. At follow up two thirds were still off general assistance or family benefits. The fact that the majority of the W.A.P.'s clients have passed with little effect through much more expensive helping systems makes it a valid approach to rehabilitation and in some cases to habilitation. A longer term evaluation is necessary for a cost benefit analysis, but the present results are optimistic.

It has been estimated that nine per cent of the world's population have some type of mental, emotional or physical handicap. The trend to faster discharge of a greater number of residents of treatment centres for the retarded and the mentally ill means that more sustaining procedures are needed in the community. Problems in relating to other people are paramount in this group; many are so paralyzed by their own situations and fear of failure that they cannot see beyond themselves. They need to learn how to function in a group. The work activity program in a sense plays the role of the therapeutic substitute family. Inadequate and aggressive personalities are able to relate to the staff in an atmosphere of warmth and closeness, and by using them as identity models, change their own behaviour. In turn they help others within the program. This approach of course requires very strong staff who refuse to be manipulated. Fortunately the participants are drawn

to the most effective staff members and pay little attention to those who play the role of helpees more than helpers.

The program provides a breathing space for many who are overwhelmed by their problems. It gives them a chance to mobilize their strengths. The informal contact maintained by so many terminations suggests they keep coming back to renew themselves. The dropouts who signed up also received service from the staff who sometimes channeled them into more appropriate activities. Emotional as well as financial independence is aimed at, a difficult process for people who tend to cling when they finally find something they can rely upon. Gradually tempers are being controlled, baths are being taken, suicide attempts are becoming more rare, as the group members start to look forward to what they can achieve in the future rather than to how drunk they will get that night. Sometimes the group seems too ingrown; roommates and sexual partners make the rounds, mainly because few of them have any other friends. New people keep coming in, however, and several who have been too disruptive and manipulative have been counselled out.

Once the social and emotional situations of the participants are more stable and their educational levels raised, what is the next step? Some have been motivated sufficiently to be admitted to retraining courses; others have found jobs. Nevertheless, increasing automation is phasing out more and more of the traditional jobs of the poor; the gap between the haves and the have nots is widening. Nor is a guaranteed income the ultimate answer to poverty because a sense of usefulness seems to be what the people in the W.A.P. most crave. They welcome jobs that are meaningful to them. Many willingly work on evenings and Saturdays; their boredom and social needs are desperate. They have nowhere else to go where they feel comfortable.

Job development is necessary because so many of this group have been unsuccessful in the normal operation of the labour market. Jobs need to be created that make use of their potential skills so that they can move off welfare rather than being comfortable on it.

The present project is attempting to do this in some of the work assignments. The logical extension of this program would be a career ladder that permits these people to move ahead in their own areas of interest as they gain skills and experience. They should be given the chance to progress in the work that gives them satisfaction but be paid for it rather than relying on welfare. Opportunities for Youth and Local Initiative Projects finance these types of experiences for middle class youth -- the poor should have the opportunity too. Neighborhood service centres in low income areas could provide employment for some W.A.P. graduates.

Only the surface of the need for such programs as the Toronto project has been scratched. Referrals from only a few district welfare offices have been sent to the present W.A.P.. A variety of programs on the same theme are necessary for different groups. Those with more than grade eight, young married couples, and older people not interested in schooling, all need services to help them to become as independent and as responsible as possible. There are a few who will always need long term sheltered employment.

Testimonials from some of the work activity participants themselves are perhaps the most revealing test of the program's adequacy. A young woman with a high I.Q. and a tragic history of institutionalization said she had changed her mind about the Social Services Department since entering the W.A.P. which she felt was making every possible effort to get people off welfare. The day she graduated from grade eight, she won custody of the child of her marriage. Without the support of the W.A.P. it is unlikely she would ever have regained her little child or have been admitted to a retraining course.

An overweight girl with a speech problem said she was sad and frightened when she first came to the program; her mother told her she was retarded and she believed it. Now she has friends and says she feels happy when she keeps busy at the project. She talks to some new people who are thinking about signing up for the W.A.P. and is its best salesman.

